#### JOHN

# NOT SO WRONG AFTER ALL:

OR,

WHAT HE SAID FOR HIMSELF, OR COULD BE SAID FOR HIM, TO DAME EUROPA.

BY A BOY WHO WAS PRESENT, IN A LETTER TO HIS COUSIN.

QUIS CUSTODIET IPSOS CUSTODES?

WHAT SHALL PREVENT THE EXTINGUISHERS

THEMSELVES FROM TAKING FIRE?

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & Co., STATIONERS' HALL COURT.
WELLINGTON, SOMERSET:
RICHARD CORNER, SOUTH STREET.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

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Some apology is due to the reader for the publication of so much slang as distinguishes this young gentleman's letter. But it seems to have been in vogue with Dame Europa's pupils, judging from what we have already heard and read of them. Indeed, one hardly knows what was learnt at that school, where, except a little sentimental gardening as appears, frothy notions of duty, and the indulgence of mischievous Quixotic sympathies, formed, for all that can be seen, the larger part of what the youngsters were taught.

### JOHN

### NOT SO WRONG AFTER ALL.

My DEAR JEM,

I suppose you have read the account of the row there has been here. and of the "Fight in our School." It's most of it bosh, as I can tell you, and we all believe it was written by one of our Mistress's friends, where she goes, as you know, to drink tea so often. Just before you left last half, you remember she appointed five of the head boys monitors, to keep us from fighting as she said; and no wonder, for this school has about as many scamps in it as any in the world-besides she is an impulsive and philanthropical old lady enough. that as it may, Louis and William have had a most awful fight, and Louis has got licked all to fits. Somehow or other we did not

expect they would come to blows. William was such a religious fellow you know, and Louis such an agreeable pleasant chap. What they quarrelled about was who should be cock of the school. Louis has been all along, and thought to remain so, and we all thought it likely enough too. However, he got knocked down the very first "round." William was in rare trim, it turned out, and had been taking lessons of the "Tipton Slasher." Louis was but in flimsy condition. He had been always dancing and fiddling in that arbour of his, and swallowing all the lies about himself of his "fags" and "pals." No matter for this, he was the first to show fight, and got knocked down for his pains every time he came up. He behaved uncommon plucky though, but he might just as well have given in in time, as you would be frightened to see what a figure he is, half blind of one eye, and nearly all his teeth gone. Well, what do you think? Our Dame lays all the blame on John, had him up and lectured him before us all because

he did not interfere for Louis and pitch into William. Louis, you know, is a parlour boarder and a great favourite with her, whilst William has of late been inclined to be saucy, in fact is getting too big for the school. Well, she talked so fast and so loud, and the rest made such a noise with their hands and feet, that not a word he said in defence could be heard. and the old lady would have the last word. You know John is not a favourite here; he is such a quiet sort of fellow, keeping very much to himself; besides they are jealous of him because he looks so happy and comfortable. What he did say, as far as I could hear, was That as a monitor he thought his business was, and as he was appointed, to give advice, as the word implies, and not to get fighting himself. That he did give advice to both sides and "no mistake," and got no attention at all. That Louis began, and neither first nor last would listen to reason. That if he had interfered for Louis no doubt some other boy would have done the same for William, and a pretty scrimmage there would have been in the school. That he did not know why he should be called on alone, and not the two other monitors, Alec. and Joseph. By-the-bye, Alec., you know, is a sulky, bearish sort of chap, and best let alone, the Dame thought, I dare say. Towards the end of the fight he had been heard to grumble and growl "a few," as if he wanted a row for himself; and Joseph had had a taste of Bill's maulies not long since, and was not likely to come to the scratch again in a hurry. As to John making an excuse about his dress (I forget whether the story goes that it was too good or too bad) it's all lies. He never said any such thing. Which shows it must have been written by the old lady I spoke of, for none but a woman would think of making a fellow fight with his coat on. He told the dame it was not so very long ago that he did interfere in more fights than one, and at her suggestion too (and got no thanks from any one, especially herself), of which he had got the marks about him even now, to say nothing of slight asthma, and oppression

on the chest ever since. But what John did not like to confess was this, -and there is no doubt of it,—that he had so devoted himself of late to turning and carving in that little workshop of his, instead of working a bit in his garden as the rest of us did, and had got so fat and rusty that he was not up to fighting at all. The old Dame called him a coward-she ought to be ashamed of herself. John is no coward, everyone knows that, and a strong boy, a very strong boy; but let him be what he may, to have meddled in the fray when about as fit to fight as a porpoise, and with but little more wind than a woolpack, would have proved him a fool into the bargain. John can bide his time, and can well afford to take no notice of any such lectures from old women. Nevertheless, it is "hard lines" on him to be so abused, and I have written you this letter, because such was the clamour and confusion, and so noisy even Dame Europa herself, that what he said for himself, or could be said for him, had no chance of being heard at the time.

But what do you think, old fellow? John's Governor is going take him away, and I wish mine would do the same with me. The Governor says he shall not be left at a Dame's school any longer. That boys will fight, do what you will to prevent it, but that to be made a monitor of in order to keep the peace and then abused for not fighting on that side which happens to be the favorite at the time with the Dame, is too bad altogether. He will be placed under a master where he will be taught no such humbug, and where, besides amusing himself as is his wont in his workshop, he will get plenty of air and exercise, take some lessons in the "Art of Self Defence," and learn to protect himself, and even others, if necessary.

Your affectionate Cousin,

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